Embedding rights into early years research: A hierarchical model of children’s research participation rights, based on information, understanding, voice, and influence

(SELF-ORGANISED SYMPOSIUM)

DR. FIONA MAYNE The University of Western Australia, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, Australia

Theme
How much progress has been made on ensuring children’s rights and what forums can we create to hear and respond to the voices of children and their parents?

Strand
Children’s rights, democracy & participation

Non-Presenting Authors
CHRISTINE HOWITT, The University of Western Australia, Australia, christine.howitt@uwa.edu.au
LEONIE RENNIE, Curtin University, Australia, L.Rennie@curtin.edu.au

Research aims
This presentation aims to create a forum for thought-provoking discussion about the levels of research participation that are afforded to young children.

Relationship to previous research works
Based on the final conclusions of a PhD study that focussed on early childhood research ethics and participation, the Hierarchy of Children’s Research Participation was developed.

Theoretical and conceptual framework
With the Interactive Narrative Approach to early childhood research as its foundation, Roger Hart’s 1992 ladder of participation was extended to incorporate the four UNCRC participation rights found in Article 12 - information, understanding, voice, and influence.

Paradigm, methodology and methods
The Hierarchy of Children’s Research Participation illuminates the range of research participation levels accessible to young children and how children’s participation rights can be embedded more effectively in research. This presentation examines the transformative effect that different levels of informing can have on the quality of children’s understanding as research participants. It demonstrates how ‘informing’ flows on to affect a child’s ability to express their views and the degree to which their voices ultimately exert influence.

Ethical Considerations
Ethical considerations were given priority throughout this study.

Main finding or discussion
Each of the four elements of information, understanding, voice, and influence plays an essential role in upholding children’s rights in research. This innovative Hierarchy of Children’s Research Participation emphasizes the importance of weaving rights throughout a research project from its conception, rather than applying children’s rights in isolation.

Implications, practice or policy
Considering rights in a more integrated manner has the potential to democratize participation experiences for young children and to enhance the way young children are valued as citizens with rights to meaningful
participation.

**Keywords:** participatory research, rights-based research, UNCRC Article 12, hierarchy of research participation, Interactive Narrative Approach

This abstract may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

**Chairing opportunity**
I would be willing to chair a symposium (including one which I am not presenting in)

[EECERA Logo]

European Early Childhood Education Research Association